

MINUTES

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

CITY OF BRANSON, MISSOURI

June 15, 2010

1) Call to Order

The Budget & Finance Committee met in the Fishbowl Conference Room of City Hall, Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. for a special meeting to complete the agenda of May 25, 2010.

2) Roll Call

Committee Members present: Mayor Raeanne Presley, Bob Simmons, Mike Booth and Sandy Bruns.

Member absent: Brian Blankenship

Also present: Dean Kruthof, Lori Helle, Jamie Rouch, Carl Garrett, Jerry Adams, Lisa Westfall, Mike Ray, JoLyn Tate and Nancy Haskin.

4) Discussion of Revenues

A. Sources

Lori Helle gave an overview of various revenue sources of Missouri municipalities. This information was gleaned from a published comprehensive study by the Missouri Municipal League. The report uses three (3) categories of population, *Large* – cities of over 10,000; *Medium* – municipalities of 2,500 to 10,000; and *Small* – municipalities under 2,500 population. Branson falls within the *Medium* category based on population, but because of the large tourist influx, it could be compared with other cities in the *Large* category.

Lori explained each revenue source and discussion was held on the pros and cons of each possible source of revenue that could be considered by Branson at some time. Branson already has some of the taxes/fees in place, and those were discussed as well. Many of the revenue sources would require a vote of the people to put them into effect, and timing is of the essence should that decision be made in the future. One source of interest was the capital improvement sales tax that would be linked directly to a capital project or capital equipment. Another source that would be linked to a special project, such as land purchase for new ball fields, would be a limited Parks/Recreation municipal property tax or Parks sales tax.

Mike Booth and Bob Simmons both discussed the fact that any added tax/fee placed on the constituents would need to be well thought through; be for a specific purpose; be placed on a ballot with strategic timing; and have champions in the community in support of the issue. All members agreed that all revenue sources should be considered when discussing the budget for 2011 and in looking forward to future years while planning debt repayment. The 5-Year TIF report is nearing completion and will be used as a planning tool when looking at the possibility of shortfalls in the coming years. The consensus of the committee was that waiting too long could be too late, as the process is long and tedious.

B. Proposed Changes

Fee increases and/or additional fees from the Fire, Health, and Planning Departments had been presented at the previous meeting and recommended to the Board of Aldermen. A short discussion was held regarding these and all code changes will be forwarded to Lisa

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Westfall, City Clerk, who will write the language. A request was made to have Lisa link the code changes to Notes on the fee changes when they return to the Finance Committee for final approval.

Business Licenses:

Carl Garrett gave a short overview of various methods for calculating business license fees, but any change would require voter approval.

5) Discussion of Utility Code Changes

Water and sewer deposits were discussed with staff recommending the following; raising some fees to at least cover final bills; allowing realtors to pay a deposit that is transferrable from property to property to facilitate showings and inspections; adjusting water meter connection fees of meters greater than one inch to actual costs with a minimum of \$650; and complying with MRSo 250.140 which states both occupant and owner of premises receiving water and sewage services or either of them are liable to pay for such services. Also, code will be changed for clarification regarding damaging or tampering of water/sewer lines or equipment; adjustments to water and/or sewer bills due to leaks; and giving the City Administrator the authority to adopt rules, regulations, policies and procedures of this code.

Bob Simmons moved the committee approve the proposed changes and recommend them to the Board of Aldermen. Mike Booth seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6) Discussion of proposed Tourism Tax Deposit

Carl Garrett gave the committee an overview of the proposed Tourism Tax deposit, which would help the City recover some possible loss of revenue when a business closes and fails to pay the tourism tax owed. This deposit would be required of all new tourism tax-paying businesses and any future businesses that get their business license revoked for failure to file and/or pay tourism taxes. These businesses would be required to post a cash deposit equal to one month of tourism tax liability. It would be refunded within 45 days after the business ceases operation and all tourism tax returns and payments have been made to the City. The recommended minimum deposit was proposed as \$50; the committee felt this should be \$100. Interest will not be paid to the business on the tourism tax deposit amount.

Mike Booth moved the Finance Committee approve the proposed Tourism Tax Deposit with the increased minimum deposit amount and recommend approval by the Board of Aldermen. Motion was seconded by Sandy Bruns, Motion carried.

7) Adjourn

Dean Kruihof moved the meeting adjourn, with the next regular meeting to be held Tuesday, June 22, 2010.